

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 1, 2009, 8:00 a.m.
Development Department, 95 Merrick Way, Suite 450, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

MEMBERS	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	#	M	A	M	J	J	COMMISSIONERS
Bertram "Chico" Goldsmith *									X			<u>P</u>	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick II
Raymond Zomerfeld	X	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	X	P	P	P	P	Vice Mayor William Kerdyk, Jr.
John M. "Jack" Thomson*	X								X			<u>E</u>	P	Commissioner Maria Anderson
Haydee Polo*	X								X			P	P	Commissioner Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
James Casey	X	P	P	E	P	E	P	P	X	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Wayne "Chip" Withers

STAFF:

Kevin Kinney, Parking Director
Jessica Wotherspoon, Business Development Specialist

A = Absent
E = Excused Absence
P = Present
X = No Meeting
= Special Meetings
*** = New Member**

GUESTS: Planning Director Eric Riel; Carol Ellis-Cutler, Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce; BID Executive Director Mari Molina; Rip Holmes, Citizen

RECORDING SECRETARY: Nancy C. Morgan, Coral Gables Services, Inc.

Meeting Motion Summary:

The minutes of the June 3, 2009 Board meeting were approved.

Chair Ray Zomerfeld called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

1. Approval of June 3, 2009 Board Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Casey made a motion to approve the Board meeting minutes of June 3, 2009 as presented. Mr. Goldsmith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2. Status on Affordable Housing in Coral Gables by Planning Director Eric Riel:

As part of an overview of the issue, Mr. Riel said the State and Regional Planning Council's goals require workforce attainable housing within local governments, a challenge in some areas. After a 2006 study on the issue, Planning Department staff drafted regulations, including density bonuses, reductions in parking and other incentives to encourage developers to include workforce attainable housing units. Opining that these housing needs were a regional issue, Mr. Riel said the City was considering partnering with Miami-Dade County. He described the Gables Gateway project as possibly contributing 35 units to the City, based on a median family-of-four income of \$225,000, or \$1,300 to \$1,600 as a monthly rental.

The Planning Department will update the 2006 study over the next year, including new regulations and developer/owner incentives. Stating that the development community was receptive to the concept, Mr. Riel advised that the statute on the issue requires the City to provide 440 units within ten years, or 10% of the actual need.

Issues discussed between Mr. Riel and Board members:

- Apartments affordable to young, single people bring residents into the City (who often remain as they mature);
- A mile or two radius around the City could create a land bank;
- The State can refuse certain allocations of funds if the City does not comply with the statute within the specified time period;

- Key to success of the process is partnering;
- A recommendation not to ease parking requirements for developers;
- Revive availability of apartments above downtown businesses and small apartment buildings mixed with commercial space;
- Consider how workforce attainable housing is monitored to ensure families remain in units, and developers conform with guidelines;
- Units should be identified as workforce attainable prior to a transaction and, if people accepted for workforce attainable housing increase their income beyond guideline limits, they should be required to move so others can access the housing opportunity.

The Board will continue to study the issue, encouraged updates to the process, and will eventually provide its specific recommendations to the Commission.

3. Status on Streetscape Plan on Miracle Mile and Giralda Avenue by Mari Molina:

Stating that this Board was the first to support the Streetscape Plan, Ms. Molina reviewed the process that began with community-wide visioning during the 2002 Charrette, stating the importance of providing a vibrant downtown for residents, including pedestrian-friendly streets and landscaping.

After discussions with the City and merchants, an advisory group was formed in 2008, comprised of volunteers including U.M. urban planning, architectural and transportation experts, as well as the City's Parking Director and Parking Advisory Board. The group examined multiple scenarios, held public meetings with business and property owners, conducted a parking study and developed a final streetscape recommendation.

Today, Ms. Molina continued, many issues that need to be addressed are related to parking, such as paseos and connections both in front and behind Miracle Mile. Options for Miracle Mile are 1) keep diagonal parking as it is; 2) creating modified angle parking that allows sidewalks to extend; 3) parallel parking. It is hoped that the changes will slow traffic to increase protection for pedestrians and businesses.

Regarding Giralda Avenue's "restaurant row," the project is being planned as a shared street (no curbs), facilitating more outdoor seating and a narrow traffic lane permitting the street to be closed off for special events.

In February, Ms. Molina said, the City Commission approved accessing some GOB funding for the project, earmarked to hire architectural engineers, who are currently preparing design plans and costing the project. The BID will coordinate with the City to conduct a public information campaign with photographs and costs. Although other sources for funding have been sought, efforts so far have been unsuccessful. Ultimately, merchants will need to contribute, but the intent is to avoid imposing additional hardship on them.

Ms. Molina offered to update the Board on project progress in September. Mr. Kinney added information about redevelopment of Garage One as part of the overall plan, which would include approximately 600 parking spaces and good connections to Miracle Mile.

Discussion topics included wayfinding signage, paseos, garage branding to eliminate the number system, traffic impact, minimizing business disruption, using private garages for public use, valet parking options, Mile vacancies and the negative effects of the City's lengthy permitting process on opening new stores/businesses.

At the request of the Board, Mr. Kinney updated information about the Ponce de Leon Boulevard streetscape projects, which will also impact parking as it converts from angle to parallel parking in the north Ponce area.

4. Meeting Attendance Requirements:

Ms. Wotherspoon reviewed Board meeting attendance requirements, and stated that Mr. Kinney was overseeing the Economic Sustainability Department until Assistant City Manager, Maria Jimenez returned from vacation.

5. Discussion of 2009-2011 Term Goals:

As a continuation of the term goals discussion, Board members made the following comments:

- Select a few goals on an ongoing basis.
- The Mayor suggested meeting with the City Manager (to be invited to the August meeting).
- Parking garages need to be improved, particularly Garage One.
- Crime prevention in downtown is connected to Coral Gables Crime Watch, whose executive director could meet with the Board.
- The availability of sufficient police and fire officers downtown as the population increases.
- Consider specific goal-oriented initiatives, such as signage.
- Generate political momentum to propel positive projects.
- Paseos/connections, landscaping to provide shade on the streets and pet waste receptacles, including disposable waste bags.
- Funding will likely be a challenge for some projects.
- Wireless cloud.
- An increase in marketing and public relations efforts/City exposure throughout the region to attract businesses that will, in turn, increase the City's tax base.
- Residential, retail and business challenges experienced by people when they conduct necessary business with the City.
- Vibrancy of the City spurs the economic engine of the City.

Mr. Zomerfeld requested a copy of the Department's budget to help the Board focus on specific projects, and stated his hope that the City Manager would attend the August meeting. He urged Board members to speak with their appointing officials, and encouraged forward movement with goals development.

Mr. Kinney spoke about the positive impetus of combining efforts of multiple boards to promote initiatives. Ms. Wotherspoon offered to research and summarize the priorities of other boards to facilitate cooperation.

6. Additional Business:

Mr. Kinney encouraged Board members to attend the October 2, 2009 ethics training session, which includes new issues, and will be held at the Coral Gables Youth Center beginning at 9 a.m. until early afternoon.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Next Economic Development Board Meeting: Wednesday, August 5, 2009 at 8:00 a.m., Development Department Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Kinney,
Parking Director and Interim Secretary to the Board